

After Final Amendment F
Appl. No. 10/030,886
December 7, 2005

Remarks

Applicant requests reconsideration on the merits of the above-referenced patent application.

I. Claim Amendments

This amendment cancels claims 14, 17, and 27. Thus, claims 15, 16, 18, and 28 are pending. This amendment amends each of the pending claims. Applicant submits that this amendment does not introduce any new matter. Specifically:

Claims 18 and 28 have been rewritten in independent form. Accordingly, these claims also have been amended to incorporate the limitations from their dominant claims.

Other amendments simply rephrase the claims. Applicant submits that such amendments are permissible under MPEP §2163.07.

All the pending claims recite subject matter that the Examiner has found to be allowable. Thus, Applicant requests that the claim amendments be entered because they only require cursory review by the Examiner and place the claims in condition for allowance or will reduce the issues on appeal. See MPEP §§714.12 & 714.13. In addition, Applicant notes that the amendments to claims 18 and 28 should be added as a matter of right, given that they comply with the suggested language in the June 16, 2005 Office action by rewriting claims 18 and 28 in independent form. See MPEP §714.12.

Applicant reserves the right to pursue any canceled subject matter and/or any other subject matter disclosed in this application in one or more divisional and/or continuation applications.

II. Acknowledgement of allowable subject matter

Applicant acknowledges the finding of allowability as to claims 15 and 16, and the allowability of the subject matter of claims 18 and 28.

III. Response to claim objections

Objections have been raised to claims 18 and 28 for being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Applicant requests withdrawal of this objection. Per the Examiner's suggestion,

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claims 18 and 28 have been rewritten in independent form and include all the limitations of their dominant claims. Thus, the objections have been rendered moot.

IV. Response to rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 14, 17, and 27 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of Nitas (U.S. Patent No. 6,106,838). Applicant requests withdrawal of this rejection. Claims 14, 17, and 27 have been canceled, thereby rendering this rejection moot. Applicant is canceling these claims in an effort to expedite prosecution of this patent application, and makes no further representations as to the merit of the rejection.

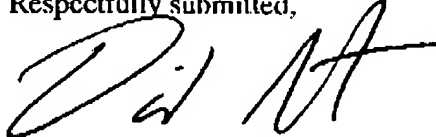
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Applicant hereby requests a 3-month extension to respond to the June 16, 2005 Office action, and authorizes the Commissioner to charge Deposit Account No. 02-2334 for the corresponding extension fee. Applicant does not believe that any other fee is due in connection with this filing. If, however, Applicant does owe any such fee(s), the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the fee(s) to Deposit Account No. 02-2334. In addition, if there is ever any other fee deficiency or overpayment under 37 C.F.R. §1.16 or 1.17 in connection with this patent application, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge such deficiency or overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2334.

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Applicant submits that the pending claims are in condition for allowance, and requests that this application be allowed. The Examiner is requested to call the Undersigned if any issues arise that can be addressed over the phone to expedite examination of this application.

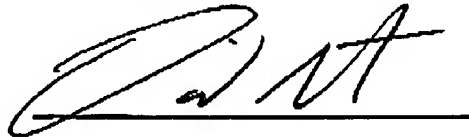
Respectfully submitted,



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CERTIFICATE OF FACSIMILE

I certify that this correspondence is being sent via facsimile on December 7, 2005 to facsimile no. (571) 273-8300 to the attention of Examiner Kevin E. Weddington, Mail Stop AF, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450.



DMG/DAP